

Amendments to the Claims:

Claims:

1-22. (cancelled)

- 5 23. (new) A bridge for a Host-Bridge-Device system, the bridge comprising:
a device bus interface for coupling a device to the bridge utilizing a first
communications protocol;
a plurality of host bus interfaces for coupling the bridge to a host system
utilizing a plurality of communications protocols;
10 a plurality of bridge chips, each bridge chip coupled to the device bus interface
and to a respective host bus interface of the plurality of host bus
interfaces, and for communicating between the first communications
protocol of the device bus interface and a communications protocol of
the respective host bus interface being coupled to the bridge chip; and
15 a plurality of activation circuits, each activation circuit corresponding to a
bridge chip and being for disabling the corresponding bridge chip until a
predetermined protocol initialization signal sent by the host system is
received by the activation circuit, and further for enabling the
corresponding bridge chip to control the device bus interface upon
20 reception of the predetermined protocol initialization signal sent by the
host system when all the bridge chips are disabled.
24. (new) The bridge of claim 23 wherein the activation circuits are further for
disabling all of the bridge chips when a hardware reset occurs so that none of the
25 bridge chips control the device bus interface.
25. (new) The bridge of claim 24 wherein the activation circuits are further for
disabling all of the bridge chips after a power on occurs so that none of the bridge
chips controls the device bus interface.
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26. (new) The bridge of claim 23 wherein once a particular bridge chip is enabled, the
activation circuits are for allowing only the particular bridge chip to remain enabled

and in control of the device bus interface until a hardware reset occurs.

27. (new) The bridge of claim 23 wherein the predetermined protocol initialization
5 signal is a reset signal sent by the host system to reset the bridge or the device coupled
to the bridge.

28. (new) The bridge of claim 23 wherein the predetermined protocol initialization
10 signal is an initialization signal sent by the host system to initialize the bridge or the
device coupled to the bridge.

29. (new) The bridge of claim 23 wherein when the plurality of bridge chips are
disabled the device bus interface is set to float.

30. (new) The bridge of claim 29 wherein the device bus interface is coupled to an
15 external host system, and when the plurality of bridge chips are disabled the external
host system is for controlling the device through the device bus interface.

31. (new) The bridge of claim 23 wherein the activation circuits are for enabling at
20 most one of the bridge chips to control the device bus interface.

32. (new) The bridge of claim 23 wherein once a particular bridge chip is enabled,
the activation circuits are for allowing only the particular bridge chip to remain
enabled and in control of the device bus interface until the host system has been
disconnected from the bridge.

25 33. (new) A method for bridging a device utilizing a first communications protocol
with a host system, the method comprising:

coupling the device utilizing the first communications protocol to a bridge
through a device bus interface;
30 coupling the bridge to a host system utilizing a plurality of communications
protocols through a plurality of host bus interfaces;
providing a plurality of bridge chips within the bridge, each bridge chip

- coupled to the device bus interface and to a respective host bus interface
of the plurality of host bus interfaces;
communicating between the first communications protocol of the device bus
interface and a communications protocol of the respective host bus
5 interface being coupled to the bridge chip utilizing each bridge chip;
providing a plurality of activation circuits, each activation circuit
corresponding to a bridge chip;
disabling the bridge chips until a predetermined protocol initialization signal
sent by the host system is received by a particular activation circuit; and
10 when all the bridge chips are disabled, enabling a bridge chip corresponding to
the particular activation circuit to control the device bus interface upon
reception by the particular activation circuit of the predetermined
protocol initialization signal.
- 15 34. (new) The method of claim 33 further comprising disabling all of the bridge chips
when a hardware reset occurs so that none of the bridge chips control the device bus
interface.
- 20 35. (new) The method of claim 34 further comprising disabling all of the bridge chips
after a power on occurs so that none of the bridge chips controls the device bus
interface.
- 25 36. (new) The method of claim 33 further comprising once a particular bridge chip is
enabled, allowing only the particular bridge chip to remain enabled and in control of
the device bus interface until a hardware reset occurs.
- 30 37. (new) The method of claim 33 wherein the predetermined protocol initialization
signal is a reset signal sent by the host system to reset the bridge or the device coupled
to the bridge.
38. (new) The method of claim 33 wherein the predetermined protocol initialization
signal is an initialization signal sent by the host system to initialize the bridge or the

device coupled to the bridge.

39. (new) The method of claim 33 further comprising setting the device bus interface to float when the plurality of bridge chips are disabled.

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40. (new) The method of claim 39 further comprising coupling the device bus interface to an external host system, and controlling the device through the device bus interface utilizing the external host system when the plurality of bridge chips are disabled.

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41. (new) The method of claim 33 further comprising enabling at most one of the bridge chips to control the device bus interface.

42. (new) The method of claim 33 further comprising once a particular bridge chip is enabled, allowing only the particular bridge chip to remain enabled and in control of the device bus interface until the host system has been disconnected from the bridge.

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